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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1909.

**TWO AMERICANS.**

Truth is still stranger than fiction and fate remains the master dramatist of them all. No more thrilling climax to the long drama of Arctic exploration could have been contrived by human cunning than Peary's telegram from remote Labrador, which startled the country yesterday afternoon. That brief message draws together all the loose ends of the play, and brings a swift and decisive denouement. It blows away the last vestiges of doubt. It makes it certain that the pole has been discovered, and by an American. It gives to Dr. Cook the needed opportunity to verify his claim, which otherwise might have been long denied him. He welcomes it like a man, who has nothing to fear. The cable quotes him as expressing the hope that the news is correct, confident that Peary's description of the spot where all meridians meet will confirm his own.

Men have been exploring the polar regions for three centuries and over. Within five days of each other two Americans, working separately and independently, return with the news that they have won to the heart of the quest, the pole itself. There was never so sensational an event in the history of exploration, not even the revelation of a new world in 1492. The pole in itself may be of little consequence, but finding it has baffled the strong and daring as nothing else has. Two Americans beating the world to it, almost together as the news comes, is a contingency at which a writer of fanciful romance might have balked, fearing to tax his readers' credulity. Yet perhaps it is, after all, the logical result of indomitable pluck applied to the accumulated experiences of others.

Peary reports that he reached the pole on April 6, 1909. Cook reports that he reached it on April 21, 1909. The Brooklyn physician thus has a prior claim by nearly a year. The opportunity to check up the two narratives will be awaited by the newspaper-reading world with scarcely less intense interest than by the men of science. Cook's narrative has met a certain amount of skepticism. Peary has the enormous advantage of reliable companions to corroborate his statements. It lies in his hand to verify or discredit the narrative of his predecessor. The detailed story which he will put on the wires at Chateau Bay some time to-day may make or unmake Cook. If he and his companions should say that they found a continent at the pole, Cook having stated that there was only ice-land, the situation would be exceedingly delicate. However, there is no reason to anticipate anything of the sort. At the moment, there is only one basis of comparison between the two, and this is the date when the goal was attained. Each reports that he reached the pole during the month of April, and to this extent each narrative tends to confirm the other.

If Cook's claim to priority is established, it is impossible not to feel a keen sympathy for Peary. Having given the best years of his life to the search for the pole and returning at last bursting with the news of his triumph, he learns that another has been before him. Peary heard the thunder-clap last night, or he will hear it to-day. It was news to knock all the heart out of the most generous of men. Nevertheless the glory of Peary's attainment is in no sense dimmed because another man has won it, too, and the names of these two will go down in history inseparably linked.

**POOR ROGHI.**

The heart goes out in pity for the sorrows of El Roghi, Morocco's man in the iron cage. El Roghi means "the donkey-driver," or something of that sort, and it is this fact, rather than the man's aspirations to higher honors, that has won him the sobriquet of the Bryan of Morocco. The Roghi was a rebel, was captured by the Sultan, was placed in a great wicker cage and thus, humiliatedly exhibited to public gaze. In the wink of an eye he, a high-spirited progressive, became the big free show of Fez. His lot was that of a circus Wild Man from Borneo (captured alive in the wilds of East New York) without the pay-envelope compensation. Quite the reverse, in fact, since it was known of all men that the Sultan's eyes were fixed grimly upon his fat bank account. The populace came and spat upon him, prodded him with cane and umbrellas, offered him peanuts through the bars. Roghi, not being under contract, had the right to fight back, but what was the use? What was his badinage against that of all Fez? When he growled, the very children laughed the more, thinking it all part of the delightful game. Life became a bore to Roghi, perceiving, as he did, what an advantage the Sultan had over him at repartee. His will weakened under the torturing scrutiny of the herd, and we note that he has directed his European bankers

to pay over to his tyrant the tidy sum of \$150,000. Doubtless it would be worth more than that sum to the once proud rebel simply to get off of all fours once again.

Despotism cuts out the red tape and makes for simple methods. No one could have imagined punishment of an enemy with handsome personal profits more easily and naturally than did the Sultan. Free institutions are all cluttered up with legal processes. Expanding as our own executive power is, Mr. Taft could not conceivably cage Mr. Bryan and take his Commoner away. Mr. Aldrich cannot cage Messrs. Cummins and La Follette, though there is no question that he would like to, and gag them, too. We feel extremely sorry for Roghi, but are obliged to point out that he made a serious error in selecting his place of nativity. If he should have been born in Kansas, where insurgents are sent, not to odious confinement, but to Congress.

**THE HOLD-UP AT OUR PORTS.**

Returning European travelers are loud in their complaints against the new customs inspection methods at New York. Globe-trotters who have passed inspection scores of times declare that government officials have never been so exacting as they are to-day. Under orders from Inspector Loeb, trunks are pitilessly rifled and suit-cases enthusiastically ransacked. Courtesy is a negative quantity and consideration unknown. Testimony is not wanting that Loeb's detectives of the pier actually brush about among the passengers and surreptitiously explore their pockets.

While some of these reports are probably exaggerated, there is little doubt that the inspector's zeal, commendable as it has been in many directions, has here carried him too far. As long as the dominant political party insists upon taxing practically everything that enters our ports, the laws must be enforced. At the same time, they may be enforced with some regard for the individual rather than with machine-like and relentless rigor. While smugglers come in various guises, honest men outnumber them many to one. Indefinite rules inconvenience often for every time that they pay. The whole system is discreditable to the country, and its recent stiffening up has only made it worse. In England the officers seldom search private baggage, and in France they seek little or nothing but dutiable cigars and tobacco. Germany has more stringent rules, but they are courteously enforced. Even in Italy there is no inspection that can compare in severity to that obtaining at our ports.

The foreign visitor, used to European customs, acquires a bad impression of America when he faces the New York officer, and the American who has been abroad blushes with shame or bristles with indignation. He is now discovering that the new tariff rules are so worded as to confine his free wearing apparel within pitiful limits (Payne bill, section 49), and even learns that if he has a suit of home-bought clothes repaired in London he may be called on to pay a tariff on the difference in value.

**ACROSS IN FOUR DAYS.**

One day the speedy Mauretania, unloading her passengers at a little Welsh port instead of at Liverpool, cuts hours off the running time between New York and London. Almost the next, the Lusitania, hitherto regarded as the laggard ship of the two, cuts hours off the Mauretania's running time west. The saving in the latter case was actually less than three hours. But it was enough to enable the passengers to get ashore at once, instead of lying to all night, which meant a practical saving of over twelve hours. Now it will be the Mauretania's plain duty to shave another hour or so off her sister ship's new record, and so the rivalry will go on. The usual "record" figures mean little or nothing to the average man, since they are computed from lighthouse to lighthouse. Only the light-keepers exchanging an international visit would be particularly interested in them. But it does appear that the four-day boat is not far away.

To set a new mark for transatlantic speed cost the Lusitania 1,100 tons of coal, enough to supply the demands of 200 average Richmond families for an entire year. Such an appetite for anthracite is expensive. It makes high speed a luxury. There is a stiff premium for traveling on the two swift sister ships, but plenty of people seem willing to pay it to make the dashing schedules profitable. American business men have always estimated speed as worth buying at a bonus. Doubtless a three-day boat at double the Mauretania's rates would command good patronage. Since Columbus's day the time needed for crossing the Atlantic has been whittled down from seventy-one days to four and a half, and the whitening process is by no means completed. Our great-grandchildren will doubtless be skipping over in weird craft which land almost, if not quite, before they have started.

The Valley Virginian is an esteemed and well-intentioned contemporary, but we fear that it is somewhat deficient on Greek history. Nobody ever heard of hearing Alcibiades (not Alcibiades) called "The Just," because he was never called so.

The stock market keeps on going down. Here are Lincoln pennies dropped to par already.

The prohibition party is now forty years old, which is the prime of life. However, it doesn't seem nearly as much worried as its last notorious little stepson, the Anti-Saloon League.

Ex-Secretary Shaw wants to know why Mrs. Lora leave the farm for the city. May be she plans to grow up to be great and famous like Ex-Secretary Shaw, who was once on a farm himself.

Only think. There have been moments when some of us humdrum folk

have felt a lot of simple pleasure over the discovery of a barber's pole.

**Borrowed Jingles.**

September is hooking a few of October's specialties.

Willieboys, designing haberdashery and the like are saying that all straw hats must now be called in. However, they are quite mistaken, since ours is good for another week.

From Washington comes the news that comparatively few freight cars are idle now. Their vacation is over, too.

It is true that rolling stones gather no moss. But maybe they prefer that to staying at home and being known as moss-backs.

We very much fear that Colonel Roosevelt is about to get miffed with the telegraph editors. They are giving columns to the discovery of the pole, while bestowing only a little stick upon his massacre of the penguins.

Dr. Cook dined with the King of Denmark, an honor, we believe, which Lieutenant Shackleton has so far mislaid.

The conviction of our British brothers that the American has not found the pole.

Secretary Ballinger had the comfort of a long talk with the President yesterday. Mr. Pinchot continues to play a lone hand, but doesn't seem to mind.

They called yesterday's holiday Labor Day. Every newspaper man understands why.

Mr. Wickersham opines that as to the finding of the North Pole, the Constitution follows the flag. The gentleman evidently believes that ours is an iron constitution.

Somebody is industriously circulating the statement that Dr. Cook is a farmer's son. So the Doc wants an office, does he?

Dry toast is likely to show an enormous increase of consumption this year. We base the assertion, confidently, on the promise of butter at fifty cents a throw.

**"TRAVELERS' TALES."**

Dr. Cook Not the First to Be Discredited for Great Discovery.

Recounting in the Hans Eggede his reflections upon leaving the pole, Dr. Cook said: "I thought, with a smile, of the people who might call the whole expedition an American bluff. I felt sure I would be said to have bribed my two brave Eskimos and forced my diary containing my observations."

The explorer's prophetic instinct was not his supposition. In the scientific world some accept his statements and some accept proof, some are sarcastic, some point out difficulties they think insurmountable, some despise and avoid the liar. There are all the gradations through the quip modest and the counter-terrace quarrelsome down almost to the cynic.

Such has often been the fate of travelers returning from far countries with accounts which they could not back with law court.

Bruce, the Abyssinian explorer, was a striking instance of this. His story of his travels was the joke of all England. He was called a liar in every way that ingenuously could devise, but 10 years of further exploration, while clearing up the geographical errors into which he fell as to the sources of the Nile, have shown that he told the truth in his account of his travels in China and Tibet was rather more respectfully received, but sport was made of the number of the Chinese and of the theory that the Buddhist faith had something in common with Christianity.

But Bruce was nearly right about the number of Chinese and of the theory that the Buddhist faith had something in common with Christianity.

**THAT TART TELEGRAM.**

Discreditable Trick Had Important Political Significance.

The publication of a telegram purporting to have been sent by President Taft to St. Paul, assuring his complete sympathy with a plan to honor the Minnesota congressional delegation by a public ratification meeting, has brought prompt repudiation from the President.

Minnesotans say the bogus telegram was published to make it appear that the President approved the action of the whole congressional delegation, including Mr. Tawney, who has been criticized by his local opponents as having spoken with scorn of his against the President.

Without entering into Mr. Tawney's attitude, or whether he voted with the majority, it is necessary to say that the President's policy, the resort to the forgery of the President's name to a telegram, was a most severe repudiation.

It was a trick to be ashamed of by whomsoever committed.

But the incident is not clarified by the repudiation. The denial of the telegram is conclusive on the point, but the captious hair-splitter may now be expected to assert that the repudiation implies also that the plan, even if a public ratification meeting does not have his complete sympathy. But if that is so, it leaves the situation more muddled than before, since it is not known to what section of the delegation he would deny the honor. Still, that may be just.

The Minnesota delegation, or some part of it, seems to have been fishing for Presidential compliments with the very just result of not getting them.—Hillsburg Dispatch.

**The Courts of Europe.**

By La Marquise de Fontenay.

Prince Miguel Renounces Royal Honors  
The wedding of Miguel, Prince of Braganza, to Miss Anita Stewart, is a place to-morrow. The wedding of Miguel, Prince of Braganza, to Miss Anita Stewart, is a place to-morrow. The wedding of Miguel, Prince of Braganza, to Miss Anita Stewart, is a place to-morrow.

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**The General Demand.**

of the Well-Informed of the World has

always been for a simple, pleasant and efficient liquid laxative remedy of known value; a laxative which physicians could sanction for family use because its component parts are known to them to be wholesome and truly beneficial in effect, acceptable to the system and gentle, yet prompt, in action.

In supplying that demand with its excellent combination of Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna, the California Fig Syrup Co. proceeds along ethical lines and relies on the merits of the laxative for its remarkable success.

That is one of many reasons why Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna is given the preference by the Well-Informed. To get its beneficial effects always buy the genuine—manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co., only, and for sale by all leading druggists. Price fifty cents per bottle.

least thirty popular triumphs. Of late the sober appreciation of its work has become a sort of habit with competent magazine essayists. Doubtless in time the exact place of the laxative in the list of the great works of the world will be fixed. He will surely rank with Augier and not below Turgenev and Dostoevsky, and as one who has placed the first half of "The Truth," two or three times as many as the other of the great works of the world.

There are still some idle cars, but none of the great crops are as yet fully ready to be moved. The crops of corn, cotton, wheat and oats are in the early stages of harvest, and as one who has placed the first half of "The Truth," two or three times as many as the other of the great works of the world.

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**STATE PRESS.**

Republican Talk and Optimism.

Talk is conceded to be a considerable part of the political game, therefore the optimistic Republicans are not at all smiling at the frequent intervals from Chairman Russell, who is a chief and mouthpiece of the party.

It is not surprising, if talk were all that was needed, that the Republican party would have the battle won by this time. The fact is, however, that the party is not so simple as it seems.

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